9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

the eye, buffaloes with white tips to their tails, wild elephants caught in traps and wild hogs that had fallen into wells.

Even in social matters, these chieftains had supreme powers. In the settlement of marriages in any part of the country, the Nayars had to obtain the chieftain's sanction who held sway over the particular locality. The custom is even now in vogue though in a visibly weakened form. In the celebration of a *Kettu kalyánam* or *sambandham* in any part of the country, the parties concerned visited the chieftain and bought his consent with presents. For without such consent no settlement and celebration thereafter could be arranged. His consent had to be procured even for the holding of festivals.

The chieftain's powers were so great that, if a wife living with her husband proved an object of attraction to another, adequate presents to the chieftain would buy him a formal writ, giving him the rights of a husband over that woman. Thus even so late as only a generation or two ago, the chieftain's power was exercised in the encouragement of polyandry.

When a tali-tying ceremony had to be performed for a girl of any decent family in a locality, she was taken to the local chieftain with a nuzzar or *tirumulkázhcha* and other things prepared for the festival that was to follow. In return the girl was given a golden bracelet which she was authorised to wear in his presence. No girl who had not received such a one could wear it.

In certain parts of the State people were afraid to erect buildings of more than one storey, lest they should incur the inexorable wrath of the chieftain; nor were they allowed to tile thatched houses. Departures from these customs were allowed only with the consent of the chieftain, embodied in a writ issued by him. In rural parts even to this day such restrictions are not totally inoperative. In the State His Highness the Raja gives his sanction in regard to some social matters even to this day and Nambutiri landlords exercise a similar authority among the tenants occupying their lands. Certain kinds of conveyances such as palanquins and dholies were reserved only for chieftains while the *Pallichans* were the only people who were employed to carry them. Various titles [1]

1. Vide pages 58-60.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

291 is no covering for the head. This forms the costume of a [292] large majority of them. On special occasions or when he goes to public places, he has the same loin cloth, while a richer cloth (*pívu mundu*), somewhat longer and broader, is worn over [464] the upper part of the body. As has already been said, Nayars [177] are to be found in all grades of public service, and these as well as others wear a kind of a neat loin cloth, with a shirt and coat together with a turban to cover the head, while others more fashionable appear in European costume with turbans instead of hats; others again wear hats as well, but their number is few. Among the poorer classes, the loin cloth is not larger than a yard-and-a-half or two by three-fourth of a yard.

302 The men shave their faces and bodies clean, leaving an oval patch of hair on the top of the head, while some grow it over a large surface of the head. In both cases, care is taken to keep the tufts sufficiently long, smooth and oily, and this [177] adds considerably to their neat and handsome appearance; but it is becoming the fashion to crop the hair and to dress it in the fashion of the Europeans.

291 The Nayar women wear an inner garment round the loins and this is covered by an outer garment which is usually two-and-a-half yards in length and one-and-a-half yards in breadth. Sometimes, instead of two cloths, one cloth sufficiently long for the purpose is worn. The dress is white, and sufficiently decent to cover the lower part of the body, and a small upper cloth serves as a covering above the waist. The Nayar women of the present day wear petticoats and cover the upper part of their body [369] with a piece of cloth. It is curious to notice that this form of [178] dress does not find favour (in the rural parts) with the Nambuthiris who are either their landlords or to whom they owe some kind of allegiance or subordination. The absence of any covering for the bosom in ordinary female dress has drawn much ridicule on the Nayars, and this custom has been much mis[548] understood by foreigners. So far from indicating immodesty, it is looked upon by the people themselves in exactly the opposite light, for among them prostitutes only cover the breasts. "A custom has in it nothing indecent when it is universal," as [171] one of the travellers philosophically remarks (Dall). It is, in [576] fact, a mark of disrespect to one's own elders and betters for either a male or female of the Nayar caste, and of all castes

But much of this increase is the consequence of a greater diversification in agricultural activities with a view to reducing unemployment and under-employment among family labour and raising the family income. Poultry-keeping has, of late, become very popular with the rural families and it is unusual to find families in the rural areas which do not rear at least a few laying birds. Kerala produced 137 million eggs (hen eggs—114 million; duck eggs—23 million) in 1951, and ranked fifth among the States in egg production. Production of eggs is now much higher and may be around 200 million. Kerala is also the biggest exporter of eggs. These are sent as far as Punjab in the north, Calcutta in the east and Bombay in the west and even to foreign countries, mainly Ceylon.

Low Productivity of Livestock

3.5 On an average a cow yields 330 lbs. of milk per year, a buffalo 619 lbs. and a goat 40 lbs. These yield rates compare very unfavourably with those for other parts of India (Table 16).* The low productivity of animals is partly due to the poor inherent breed characteristics and partly due to the conditions under which they are reared. The cattle found in Kerala are all of a non-descript type. They are small in size and build. They are stunted in growth. Buffalo in Kerala weighs about half of its counterpart in U.P. or Punjab. The same is true of other livestock too.

3.6 The livestock, especially the bovines, are reared under unwholesome conditions. They are under-fed. The bulk of the ration consists of roughages, mostly rice straw, and is grossly deficient in proteins and other protective properties. The livestock feed available in Kerala is also highly deficient in some of the important bone-building minerals such as calcium and phosphates. This is a direct consequence of a high rainfall which has leached off most of these minerals from the root zones of soils. In the absence of adequate phosphatic and calcium soil amendments, the crops grown in such soils are poor in these minerals. Lack of minerals has a telling effect on the health, build and general condition of the livestock of Kerala. The small size and build are important causes responsible for their low milk yield and poor work output.

3.7 Nutritional deficiencies lead to a number of serious consequences. Poor health results in low vitality and resistance to diseases as well as a low rate of nutritional utilization from feeds. All these factors are responsible for a low level of efficiency and other hazards such as a high rate of mortality and a low rate of fertility. However, realizing the reasons for low productivity, many enlightened farmers have taken to scientific rearing of livestock and have started adding concentrates, such as waste grains, oil cakes and mineral mixtures to the cattle feed. Credit for this goes to the State's Animal Husbandry Department which has been making special efforts to educate the peasantry on the need for adding mineral mixtures to the livestock feed. The Department has been distributing mineral mixtures to farmers at subsidized rates in order to popularize them.

3.8 In view of the very poor quality of livestock in the State there is an urgent need for developing animal husbandry in Kerala. Although animal husbandry

* [Table 16, appearing on p. 282 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

part of poultry population still consists of the indigenous types despite the introduction of high yielding exotic breeds such as Rhode Island Reds and White Leghorns in the early thirties. The local breeds give 50 to 60 eggs a year, while the average by the White Leghorn and Rhode Island Reds in the Government farm is 186 and 172 eggs respectively.[1] This can convey some idea of the magnitude of unexploited potential in the poultry industry.

3.18 Commercial poultry-rearing as a subsidiary occupation by the farmers has come to be recognized as the quickest and the easiest way of increasing farm incomes and providing employment to the under-employed. In view of these advantages, poultry industry has a special appeal in Kerala. It has been estimated by some experts that through replacement of indigenous birds with the exotic ones, the contribution from this sub-sector to the total State income could be more than doubled. This would be possible in less than five years, provided the pullets of desired types are made available to the farmers in adequate numbers at a low cost. The State should strive to achieve this by opening a large number of poultry extension centres. It is suggested that by the end of 1965-66 there should be at least one poultry extension centre in each Community Development Block. During the Third Plan, 143 additional centres may be opened and all these should work in close association with the block cooperatives. An investment of Rs. 35.75 lakhs would be needed to start the proposed centres.

3.19 Duck-rearing is done only on a small scale in the State in spite of the fact that conditions in most parts of Kerala are very well suited for commercial duck-keeping. Vast inland water resources and the abundant fauna in them is an ideal condition for large scale commercial duck-rearing. There is good demand for duck products particularly in Calcutta and Ceylon but this export potential could be developed only when the fowls are bred in sufficiently large number. It is, therefore, suggested that this potential should be fully exploited and the State should take adequate steps in the matter. In order to make the programme economical, some of the poultry development blocks may include multiplication of suitable duck breeds for distribution. Efforts may be made to select the best from the local birds and rear them for producing pullets for distribution.

Rearing of Goats

3.20 Goat-rearing under stall-fed conditions is customary in Kerala. This is quite contrary to the practice found in other parts of the country, where the goats are let out during the major part of the day for free browsing. Rearing of goats, as it is practised in Kerala, does not lead to dangers such as suppression of vegetation, crop destruction, etc.

3.21 Goats are reared both for milk and meat. The average milk yield per goat is low, 40 lbs. per annum, as against the all-India average of 127 lbs. (Table 16). This is due to poor management and general malnutrition, but could be easily raised to the all-India level with improved feeding and better care. As a matter of fact it is not unusual to find goats yielding as high as 400 to 500 lbs. of milk in urban households and this is due to better management.

[1] *Administration Report of the Animal Husbandry Department*, 1957-58, Government of Kerala, 1959.

the trend towards a high rate of urbanization may be expected to continue during the coming decade.

Sex Distribution

11.4 One of the interesting demographic features of Kerala is its sex distribution which shows an excess of females. Out of a total population of 16.88 million[1] in 1961, females (8.53 million) outnumbered the males (8.35 million) by 0.18 million giving a sex ratio of 1,022 females to a thousand males (all-India: 940 females to 1,000 males). The proportion of females in the population had been rising successively over the past few decades till 1951, but during the past decade it has shown a slight tendency to fall as shown by the following table:

SEX RATIO (KERALA STATE)

Year	*Female per 1,000 males*
1901	1,004
1911	1,008
1921	1,011
1931	1,022
1941	1,027
1951	1,028
1961	1,022

11.5 The excess of females is especially marked in the working age groups. Whereas in the age group 0-15 years males exceeded females in the ratio 100: 97.7, in the age group 15-55 years the position was reverse, there being 100 males to 106.5 females. (1951 Census)

11.6 The pattern of sex distribution in the rural and urban areas is broadly similar to that in the rest of India. Females are generally found to be more predominant in the rural areas. In Kerala this contrast is quite marked as can be seen from the fact that rural sex ratio is 1,034 to a 1,000 males against the urban ratio of 990 to 1,000. The cause of this rural-urban difference is rooted in the sociological factors, the most important of which is that the males generally come over to the towns for earning their livelihood, leaving behind other members of the family in the villages.

Age Structure

11.7 Age structure is an important determinant of the proportion of economically active persons in the population. An economy with a high proportion of older people is necessarily less dynamic than an economy with a large element of younger blood. Table 56[2] gives a comparative picture of the age structure of the population in Kerala and in India, according to the Census of 1951.

[1] *1961 Census* (Provisional Population figures).

[2] [Table 56, appearing on p. 309 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AWII Kerala AWII

India urban participation rate, in case of rural participation rate, the difference is almost 8 per cent.

11.12 As a general rule the difference between rural and urban participation rates is about 6 to 7 per cent. In Kerala, however, this difference narrows down to 1.3 per cent. This is primarily due to an abnormally low rural participation rate, the causes for which are analyzed below.

11.13 It was mentioned earlier that the population of Kerala has a very high proportion of females and that this is particularly marked in the working age group. Since the proportion of females taking part in economic activity is generally less than that of males, this difference being particularly marked in Kerala (Table 57), it naturally tends to pull down the participation rates.

11.14 The participation rate in the lower ranges of age is very much influenced by the proportion of school-going children. It is well known that the standards of primary education in Kerala are the highest in the whole of India. About 18 per cent of population attends schools and colleges against only 8.31 per cent in the whole of India. This is an important factor in reducing the rural participation rate.

11.15 The size of working force is also a function of the opportunities available for work. The agricultural sector of Kerala is highly over-populated, the size of average holdings being only 1.5 acres (all-India 7.5 acres). Moreover, due to the predominance of perennial crops, cropping pattern in Kerala is much less labour-intensive than in the other parts of India.[1] That the agricultural sector of Kerala is comparatively less labour-absorbing is confirmed by the very low participation rate in the agricultural sector of Kerala in comparison to the non-agricultural sector. (Table 57). These are some of the factors limiting the scope for gainful employment in the rural areas.

Past Trend

11.16 The table below gives an indication of the trend of the general participation rate as indicated from the last three Census operations:

TREND IN PARTICIPATION RATE—1931, 1941 AND 1951

	Population Density	*Participation Rate** (In per cent)	*Total Population* (In lakhs)
1931	634	48.0	95.2
1941	737	36.6	110.37
1951	905	36.1	135.6

*These figures have to be used with reservations since the concepts in successive Censuses were different. However, suitable modifications have been made to make them broadly comparable.

N.B.: Population density and population figures are for Kerala, while participation rate figures are only for Travancore-Cochin.

[1] Chapter on Agriculture and Plantations.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

actively unemployed persons during 1956 was 6.6 lakhs.[1] The total labour force during 1956 may, therefore, be taken to be 56.9 lakh persons, i.e., 37.9 per cent of the total population.

11.29 One striking feature revealed by this survey is the very high degree of open unemployment. Open unemployment comes out to be as high as 4.2 per cent of the total population, as can be seen from Table 60 (Category 7).[2] Generally it is under-employment rather than open unemployment which is prominent in backward agricultural economies. For example, unemployment in India is only 0.29 per cent of total rural population and 1.99 per cent in urban areas giving a weighted average of 0.58 per cent[3]. The percentage of open unemployment to population in Kerala is, therefore, roughly seven times as high as in the rest of India.

11.30 Category (6) of Table 60, that is, the proportion of casual workers to the total population gives an idea of the magnitude of the problem of under-employment. The incidence of under-employment is also higher in Kerala than in India. Of the total population, 9.6 per cent belongs to this category against about 6 per cent for the whole of India.[4] Among the under-employed section of the population, on an average, a worker was unemployed for about 2.35 days per week. This, however, does not tell the whole story. There are the seasonal variations which extend the period of unemployment to several days at a stretch.

11.31 The above figures do not include disguised unemployment. In rural areas, where family enterprise is the dominant form of organization, there is generally a large surplus of hidden manpower which does take part in economic activity, but whose net contribution towards increasing the output is very little. An objective assessment of the surplus in disguised unemployment is rather difficult. It would have to rely heavily upon notional norms regarding optimum labour requirements among the self-employed sector of rural population. Within the coming decade the problem of primary importance, however, is that of providing jobs for the large back-log of unemployed, who sit completely idle, rather than for those who are in the comparatively favourable position of being employed but below their full capacity.

RURAL-URBAN UNEMPLOYMENT

11.32 The nature of unemployment in rural and urban areas varies considerably. According to NSS Report on 'Employment and Unemployment' (9th Round), open unemployment in rural areas was rather insignificant affecting only 0.29 per cent of the total rural population (urban areas 1.99%). Because of the small size of the sample, the unemployment survey referred to above did not collect separate data for rural and urban unemployment in Kerala. Under these circumstances, only rough

[1] Table 60.

[2] It may be noted that in Table 60 the absolute number of unemployed persons is likely to be high since a portion of Travancore-Cochin, viz., Kanyakumari was transferred to Madras. However, the percentage figures may be assumed to be fairly correct.

[3] *NSS Report on Employment and Unemployment.*

[4] *Ibid.*

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AWII Kerala AWII

162 464 369 approximations can be made regarding the number of persons unemployed in rural and urban areas.

11.33 There is reason to believe that the high incidence of open unemployment in Kerala is primarily due to high rural unemployment. The two basic reasons for this premise, viz., the very small size of holdings and predominance of perennial crops have already been explained. This conclusion is also corroborated by evidence from some other sources. During 1956 the number of unemployed persons registered with the Employment Exchanges was 38,988 persons.[1] A majority of those registering themselves with the Employment Exchanges generally come from the urban areas. It is believed that roughly 25 per cent[2] of the unemployed persons get themselves registered with the Employment Exchanges in India. In Kerala, the standard of literacy being very high, it may be assumed that a higher proportion (40%) of the unemployed get themselves registered. On this basis the total number of unemployed persons in urban areas would be about 0.95 lakhs. Out of the total unemployed population of 6.6 lakhs, about 5.65 lakhs must, therefore, be residents of rural areas. On the basis of these calculations, rural-urban distribution of the unemployed and the labour force for 1956 is given in the table below:

DISTRIBUTION OF UNEMPLOYMENT IN RURAL AND URBAN AREAS

(In Million)

	Rural	*Urban*	*Total*
1. Population	12.9 (86%)	2.10 (14.0%)	15 0 (100%)
2. Working Force	4.34	.68	5.02
3. Unemployed	0.565	.095	.66
4. Unemployed as Percentage of Population	0.44	.45	.44
5. Labour Force (2+3)	4.905	.775	5.68
6. Labour Force as Percentage of Population	3.80	3.69	3.786

11.34 It may thus be seen that unlike the rest of India the percentage of unemployed population in rural areas is not markedly less than that in the urban areas. In both areas it works out to about 4.5 per cent.

Educational Standards of the Unemployed

162 464 871 11.35 Analysis of educational attainments of the unemployed population can be helpful in throwing light on the qualitative aspects of the unemployed. The impression one generally gets about Kerala is that unemployment is more severe among the educated persons. The results of the Kerala Unemployment Survey do not exactly bear out this contention. Only 6.8 per cent of those unemployed had been educated upto school leaving (SSLC) standard. The extent of technical education was even lower, only 2.5 per cent of the unemployed having received any form of technical education. It would thus appear that although a fairly large proportion of [212] the unemployed may be literate, not many of them are educated, if ESLC is taken to be the minimum requirement for being defined as an educated person.

[1] *Basic Statistics—Kerala*, published by the State Department of Statistics.

[2] *NSS—Preliminary Report on Urban Unemployment* Sept. 1953.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AWll Kerala AWll

TABLE 5

CONSUMER EXPENDITURE IN RUPEES PER PERSON BY ITEMS OF CONSUMPTION FOR PERIOD OF 30 DAYS IN RURAL AREAS

Items	Travancore-Cochin		All-India	
	Expenditure level (Rs.)	Percentage	Expenditure level (Rs.)	Percentage
Foodgrains	6.10	32.7	8.70	4.06
Milk and milk products	0.49	2.3	1.35	6.3
Edible oil	0.57	3.1	0.45	2.1
Meat, egg and fish	0.78	4.2	0.42	2.0
Sugar	0.40	2.2	0.43	2.1
Salt	0.06	0.3	0.06	0.3
Other food	2.83	15.2	2.11	9.8
Food (Sub-Total)	*11.17*	*60.0*	*13.54*	*63.2*
Clothing	1.13	9.8	1.66	7.7
Fuel and light	1.13	5.9	1.16	5.4
Rent	0.08	2.8	0.30	1.4
Taxes	0.06	0.2	0.07	0.3
Miscellaneous	5.07	15.4	4.71	22.0
Non-food (Sub-Total)	*7.47*	*34.0*	*7.90*	*36.8*
TOTAL	18.64	100.0	21.44	100.0

Source: *The National Sample Survey*, Fourth Round, April-September 1952, Number 13.

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AWI India
Kerala AWI

Towns

The towns of Kerala are for the most part either ports or crossing-points on the backwaters. There is virtually no indigenous maritime tradition, but from very early times spices attracted traders from E and W: Arabs, Graeco-Romans, Chinese.[51] With the Discoveries the Malabar coast became the scene of a fierce struggle between the Portuguese and their Muslim and European rivals. Relics of the era of European conflict are the tiny French settlement of Mahé (26 sq mls, poptn (1941) 14,092) and the exclaves of former British territory at Cochin itself and in Travancore

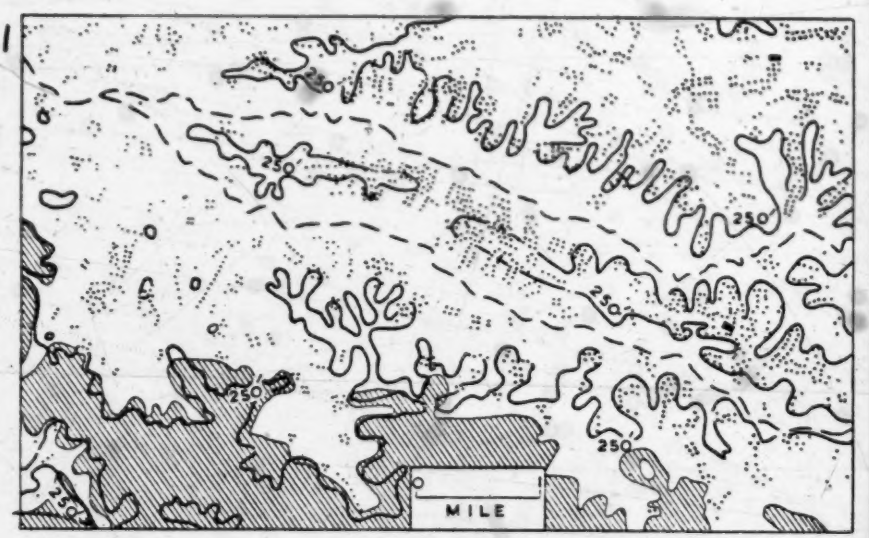

Fig. 123.—KERALA: INLAND SETTLEMENT. 5–10 mls SE of Palghat town; lateritic foothills in approach to Palghat Gap. Dots, habitations surrounded by groves; shaded, forest; blank, cultivation; broken lines, seasonal streams. SOI 58 B/10; courtesy SOI.

at Anjengo and Quilon (Tangasseri), which last had an area of 99 acres!

In Malabar Dt Tellicherry (36,320) exports most of the Coorg coffee and some pepper and copra; Calicut (158,724) has a similar trade but is more important administratively. Both ports are mere roadsteads, ships lying two or three miles offshore and lighters working from one or two piers, but at Tellicherry the shelter of offshore reefs enables some traffic to be carried on during the monsoon.

Cochin is far more important: it really consists of two adjacent towns, ex-British Cochin (26,320) and Cochinese Cochin or Mattancheri (53,346). Cochin is in fact the oldest European settlement in India; on Christmas

[51] On the Chinese shipping, see Ibn Battuta, *ed. cit.*, 235–6.

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
Kerala AW11
Laccadives AZ4
Maldives AZ5
635 K
369
K
564

Day 1500 Cabral arrived, and from then until the Dutch supplanted them in 1663 the Portuguese were in alliance with the rulers of Cochin against the Muslim Zamorin of Calicut. The port has considerable locational advantages: it is central on the backwaters, the Palghat Gap lies about 125 miles (by rail) to the NE, and it is about 300 miles nearer Aden and Durban than is Bombay. It may even rival Colombo as a transit port, as a call at Cochin adds only 40 miles to the Aden-Fremantle run.[12] The development of the modern port was for long impeded by its curious political situation; it lies on a breach in the long spit separating the great backwater from the sea, but while the major installations and the approaches lie in what was British territory, the inner harbour—in which much of the trade is carried on—is in Cochin state, and much of the backwater was Travancorean. Real development—including the cutting of a channel through the bar across the natural breach, and much reclamation—began only in 1920–23; later a 3-mile approach channel was dredged to a width of 450 and a depth of 37 ft, so that the inner harbour is now accessible to any ship which can pass Suez. Rail and road bridges cross the backwater, and a large airport has been built on reclaimed land; the old metre line to the SIR through the Palghat has been changed to BG. The volume of trade increased from 450,000 tons in 1920 to about 1,250,000 in 1950, while the number of ships using the port has more than trebled. Normally rice from Burma and Indo-China formed two-fifths in bulk of the total trade; mineral oil is also a major import. The exports are the usual Kerala ones: coconut products, especially coir and copra, tea, rubber, cashew nuts. Across the backwater is Ernakulam (46,790), capital of Cochin, with important soap factories, the largest owned (naturally) by Tatas: rice milling, as at Mattancherri, is also important. Trichur (57,524), the largest town of Cochin, has cotton spinning and weaving mills and tile factories; it shares with Palghat (55,160) command of the gap.

K
1-1
K
411
K
369

Travancore is less urbanised than Cochin, but Trivandrum (**186,931**) is the capital of Travancore–Cochin state. Alleppey (**116,278**) and Quilon are ports of ancient fame now decayed; mere roadsteads, they still carry on a considerable backwater traffic. Alleppey, protected by a mudbank, is slightly the better port, but Quilon has the advantage of its situation on the metre line from Trivandrum through the Shencottah Gap.

361
504

The Maldive and Laccadive Islands

M
L

These groups of coral atolls extend from the Equator to about 15° N, 180–300 miles from the Malabar coast. The Laccadives and Minicoy are attached to Madras, the Maldives (which have their own Sultan and constitutional government) to Ceylon: these affiliations represent historical accident merely.

133
631

[12] *Handbook of Commercial Information for India* (Delhi, 1937), 79; personal information from Sir Robert Bristow.